



# MUSIC IN TEMPLES OF KHAJURAHO (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LAKSHMAN TEMPLE AT KHAJURAHO)

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## ABSTRACT

Music is the most prominent way to express inner voice. It is an essential part of life; it is present since evolution of universe, music in trees, flowing waters, chirping of birds, blowing wind, thunder and so on and each movement of nature. The chanting of hymns in Vedas, dancing figures of harappan civilization and various cultural festivals and different activities of daily life all shows the importance of music. Some music encourages and creates legendry some mourns the real life to a dead and some takes to the zenith of material pleasure. Its importance in various spheres of human life is well depicted in Khajuraho temples. Though the temples are rich in various aspects of art but here we are going to discuss its elaboration of music in various activities of human life.

**KEYWORDS:** Hudak, Jagati, Castanet, Rasa theory.

## Introduction

Among the vast ocean of sculptures in the many Khajuraho temples, there are innumerable scenes depicting music and dancing. In view of the rich variety of musical instruments delineated in the sculptures of Khajuraho, there can be no doubt that the art of singing and dancing was largely cultivated by the people and that was much advanced. The people of Khajuraho loved to live and were still anxious to make their life still happier. They had great aesthetic sense. Contemporary or near contemporary works on sangita confirm this fact. The Natya Sastra has influenced dance, music and literary traditions in India. As it is given in "Rasa" theory, which asserts that entertainment is a desired effect of performance arts but not the primary goal, and that the primary goal is to transport the individual in the audience into another parallel reality, full of wonder, where he experiences the essence of his own consciousness, and reflects on spiritual and moral questions.

The Lakshman Temple is located in western group of temples in Khajuraho, beside Matangeshwara Temple. It is the earliest temple built in Khajuraho (C.E.930-950) a stone inscription of Yasovarman dated in Vikram 1011 (AD 953-954) Year was found amongst the ruins of this temple. The inscription refers to Vaikuntha form of Vishnu, which corresponds with the image now enshrined in the sanctum. The temple is a marvelous example of Sandhara -Prasada of Panchayatana Variety. Panchayatana style means when the main shrine is surrounded by four subsidiary shrines. There were nearly 85 temples constructed out of which few are surviving and we could say that this temple has retained very well its processional frieze on the platform façade, consisting of various scenes of everyday life of the contemporary society. Here various scenes can be seen artists playing instruments with other miscellaneous representations from various forms of life including domestic and erotic scenes.

## Some scenes of platform depict various beautiful figures of music

### Scene 1: Cultural performance in honor of prestigious person.

The below scene is taken from Jagatai (platform of the Lakshman temple) Here A prestigious person having well knotted hair carved beard wearing beautiful ornaments rings in hand and so on is given special treatment he is shown seated on a high platform on his left hand side we could see artists playing music for his entertainment and in his right people are there to pay him honor as they are not playing music. Dancer is accompanied by veena, And hudak which seems like damru, The vocal artist is shown putting his hand on ear which shows that he is singing and another one playing gong. The effect of the music can be seen very well on the face and posture of beard man he seems to be enjoying the deepest sense. On his right side may be the people sitting and standing there to pay him honor. This may be the welcome tradition of this region where the guest are honored in special way of cultural performance, some writers has nominated him as a music teacher.



### Scene: 2

The picture presents a scene where a sage is sitting in the mandap accompanied by a lady having beautiful fan in her hand the design of fan is remarkable it appears like the Japanese fan of present day. They may be having important discussion as many followers are waiting for him and the scene is accompanied with the music as is clear from the figure that no one is dancing there are people playing different varieties of drums and triumph one artist seems to be singing followed by other members may be having offering for the sage.



### Scene 3 The military band

At the jagati we could see another remarkable picture where joyous mind of soldiers is described in the panel the instruments used here by artist are flute, triumph, mridang and another variety of dhol. All the members appear to be similar on the basis of profession as the dress symbolizing the waist are similar we can see among four members the other artist facing opposite so it is not seen. This may be a military band where they might be enjoying their recess period.



### Scene: 4

The picture above depicts the scene from the folk music as dholak resemble present day celebrated cultural folk festivals. Here the young artists are accompanied by a senior artist playing gong the artists are playing similar type of dhol and vocal male artist seems to be singing here we could also remark the presence of a lady artist may be a singer as dancing figure is not represented through the posture. Scenes of music and dance are among the commonest representations.





#### Scene 5

At the top in the outer wall of the temple we could see beautiful figure of dancing artist accompanied by drum players. This temple is made on panchayatana style accompanied by four sub temple. In these small temples also we could see various pictures of music one at the niche of north-east temple. In the picture the artists are playing instruments and the lady dancer seems to be performing. It appears like they are playing any romantic music and Dance as the impact can be seen at the postures of the couples near to them. At the doorways of these small temples we could see number of figures in dancing postures. They might be shown to represent devotional or romantic music.



#### Scene 6

According to Hindu mythology Lord Ganesha is worshipped first so we could see in the starting of the circumambulation of the main Deity temple. The beautiful statue of Lord Ganesha is shown on either side two drum players one seems to be a mridang player and another seems to be playing an instrument which seems to be earlier form of tabla or resembles modern kongko.



#### Scene 7

Above the bracket of Lord Ganesha we could remark a panel of artists may be playing Devotional music. As we move forward towards right along with beautiful nymphs we could see a picture where two devotees are shown it appears like they have moved in a trans stage by the use of instruments and music they might be playing, the instrument seems like kartal which is played generally in devotional music. There devotional status is represented through their posture along with facial expressions. The drummers and musicians belonged to the aboriginal tribe, as is indicated by the features of two devotees. Playing on a pair of Castanets and a tambourine depicted on the southeast façade of the Lakshman temple. Later as we move forward one of the panels shows disciples worshipping Lord Shiva accompanied by musicians. The artists are playing flute and veena which are common forms of instruments used in these temples.



#### Scene 8

The Khajuraho temples are rich in erotic art; they have given vivid picturisation of sexual forms. One could be amazed to see even when a female is engaged with an animal to satisfy her desire, and when seen by others the panel represents as the animal conjunction was not a matter of pride, the presence of Dhol like instrument may be used there to spread the news is quite remarkable.



#### Scene 9

Some small brackets are beautifully placed by dancers accompanied by instruments. The picture below may represent a celestial scene as the small icon artist are shown flying musician or Vidyadhara playing flute and the two beside the main figure playing flute and veena may be shown there to double the beauty of the deep love which is shown between the couple as it appears that they are fully satisfied by the eyesight contact only. It represents complete state of love which they have for each other, and music helps them to reach the peak of their spiritual loving state.



#### Scene 10

As we move around we find more interesting figures accompanied by different types of musicians and dancers. The scene below shows a figure from erotic art and the presence of a drum player signifies the importance of music. It may be to create an environment for the interaction. In this temple at various intercourse scenes we could notice the presence of music artisans as is quite evident that present-day life also different types of music are played at the time of physical conjugation to provide an environment to keep the excitement; also the intercourse may be accompanied by music to make it more charming and pleasure giving. There are many explanations. Firstly, both sex and music are heavily reliant on rhythm, so it's only natural that listening to music would heighten once sexual experience. The way that we make love or the way we are in an intimate setting probably mimics greatly the type of music we like; it inspires us in that moment.





#### Scene 11

As we enter inside the temple at mandap we could find various beautiful nymphs along with that some are playing form of veena where they are beautifully carved under the shade of trees.



#### Scene 12

Around the circumbalance of garb grih a number of figures of artisans playing beautiful instuments having different postures and dressing could be noticed.



#### Discussion

The beautiful figures draw our attention to think over again and again about the form of art to give the evidence regarding the presence of music. More frequent than the combats or armies on the march are the scenes of court pageantry ceremonial gaiety and processions. In most cases, the representation of the military parades and rallies are of a ceremonial nature. The secular processions are marked by gaiety and revelry, and dance and music, while the religious processions represent devotees going out on a pilgrimage or an excursion to pay homage to a religious teacher or deity to the accompaniment of dance and music. In each sphere it appears like the creator of the temple wants to give the message that music is present in all fields of life or the activities without music seems to be incomplete, it is presented like a helping hand to enjoy any activity in its true form. And we could also understand that during those days the artist has great importance in society as they actively participated in various activities of life either in procession, fight, intercourse, ecstasy or devotion without music everything seems to be incomplete.

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